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Bob Holden, Governor • Stephen M. Mahfood, Director

STATE OF MISSOURI  
**DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES**

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The Honorable John Chamis  
Mayor  
City of Herculaneum  
1 Parkwood Court  
Herculaneum, MO 63048

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Superfund

Dear Mayor Chamis

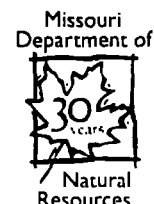
I am writing to provide you with an update on the scientific analyses of the lead redeposition in Herculaneum and to reiterate the department's position on reoccupation of residences in the "Voluntary Purchase Plan Zone." On March 16, 2004, department staff members attended a public meeting in Herculaneum to present our preliminary findings of lead redeposition in Herculaneum. At that time, the department's position was clearly stated. The available scientific evidence leads us to conclude that significant lead redeposition is occurring in Herculaneum in areas within .25 mile of the Doe Run smelter and possibly further.

Today, with several months more data at our disposal, the evidence of significant lead redeposition near the smelter is even more compelling, and the department is working closely with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the Department of Health and Senior Services to monitor the situation. Given current plant operations, trends of increasing lead deposition indicate that some residential areas closest to the smelter will inevitably become recontaminated. In fact, data indicates that recontamination at one property has already reached levels unacceptable for residential use.

The department's analysis of lead redeposition in Herculaneum leads us to believe that to sustain current smelter operations without threat to residents, there must be a buffer zone between the plant and the residents of Herculaneum. Statements by Doe Run in a recent press release and votes by your own city government against reoccupation signal that we are not alone in recognizing this.

Without several years of additional data, it is impossible to know exactly the size and shape of any buffer zone. The precise zone may lie within the current Voluntary Purchase Plan Zone, or

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it may exceed that zone in one or more areas. Furthermore, the potential for significant redeposition along the haul routes as well as the uncertain prospect of a new bridge makes the future of properties along those routes unclear.

We recognize, however, that the future of Herculaneum cannot simply be put on hold waiting for additional data. The citizens of Herculaneum are ready to plan for the future; however, planning cannot go forward without certainty about the future of the properties within the Voluntary Property Purchase Plan Area. Furthermore, living with this uncertainty is difficult for the people within the area whether they are homeowners or renters.

Therefore, we believe it is important at this time to reiterate our view, based on current circumstances and available scientific evidence, **that residential reuse of properties within the Voluntary Property Purchase Plan Zone is not acceptable.** Let me be clear: the Department of Natural Resources and the Department of Health and Senior Services do not believe there is any immediate danger to human health from lead at this time. The problem arises from the inevitability of uprooting people once they are resettled into homes where lead deposition is expected to occur at a rate that will cause unacceptable concentrations of lead over a relatively short period of time – within several years. We do not believe repeated cleanup after lead redeposition has recontaminated yards is a good solution. Nor do we have any reason to expect any changes in Doe Run's plant operations to reduce lead emissions. Changes in Doe Run's plant operations to reduce lead emissions are uncertain at this time. Moreover, recent changes in Doe Run's haul routes have the potential to increase lead redeposition rates.


With that said, the department recognizes that this gives rise to three very real concerns. First, we realize that more can be done for the existing renters, including mobile home owners within the zone for whom moving immediately presents financial and other hardships. Second, we further recognize that there are many residents within the zone whose quality of life and health may be seriously jeopardized by such a move. Finally, we recognize that the Voluntary Purchase Plan will likely lead to a "checkerboard" pattern of vacant and occupied areas within the zone.

The department recognizes and appreciates the six-month extension that Doe Run has afforded to renters and we have notified the company that we approve of that decision. We will take advantage of this additional time to work with the company to find solutions to these concerns in order to minimize the impacts. Addressing these concerns will not be easy; however, our commitment to working with Herculaneum and Doe Run will continue until workable solutions emerge. I have every confidence that we can find short-term solutions for the immediate problems as well as long-term solutions that will ensure the future and vitality of the community.

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I am directing my staff to work with the Attorney General's Office, the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency, Doe Run, and Herculaneum so that the City can plan appropriately for its development.

Herculaneum has endured much over the past several years. I very much appreciate the determination and resolve of the city in tackling this challenge and working toward cooperative solutions. Once again, I commit the resources of this department and its employees to the needs of Herculaneum as it moves forward to a renewed and vigorous community life.

Sincerely, 

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES



Stephen Mahfood  
Director

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